

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 00646 111223Z
ACTION CU-04

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R 111200Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO USIA WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9774

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 646

USIAC

FOR: IEU; STATE FOR CU//ARTS

E.O. 11652: N/A

1. STOCKHOLM MEDIA CURRENTLY CRITICIZING TAX ADVANTAGES OBTAINED BY EMBASSIES FOR THEIR VISITING INTERNATIONAL PERFORMERS. IMMEDIATE CAUSE IS THE HIGH TICKET PRICES CHARGED FOR APPEARANCES OF SAMMY DAVIS JR. DESPITE WAIVER OF 42-PERCENT TAX GRANTED BY GOS UNDER LONG-STANDING LAW PERMITTING EMBASSY TO DEFINE ARTISTS AS PART OF 'CULTURAL EXCHANGE'. ALL EMBASSIES IN SWEDEN USE SYSTEM, WITH US AND EAST BLOC APPLYING LIBERAL INTERPRETATION OF 'CULTURE' AND BRITISH MORE LIMITED ONE, ACCORDING TO PRESS. NEWSPAPERS IMPLY TAX SAVINGS SHOULD BE PASSED ON BY IMPRESARIOS TO PUBLIC AND CRITICIZE FACT EMBASSIES THEMSELVES PERMITTED TO MAKE THE 'CULTURAL' JUDGEMENT.

2. AS RESULT OF MEDIA CAMPAIGN, ISSUE WAS RAISED IN RIKSDAG FEBRUARY 9. IN REPLY, BUDGET MINISTER MUNDEBO DECLARED LAW WOULD BE REVISED TO PROHIBIT TAX BREAK. GOS HAS HAD LONG-RANGE STUDY ON SUBJECT FOR SOME TIME WITHOUT ARRIVING AT REVISION. EMBASSY ALSO HAS BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT CURRENT SYSTEM, WHICH IS SOMETHING OF A NO-WIN SITUATION --EITHER WE GET US ARTISTS DOWN ON US OR ELSE WE OPEN OURSELVES UP TO CRITICAL NOTICES IN THE PRESS -- AND HAS
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BEEN REVIEWING ALTERNATIVES. OUR HOPE IS THAT GOS COMMISSION WILL GET US OFF THE HOOK BY TAKING THIS RESPONSIBILITY ONTO SWEDISH SHOULDERS AND LIFTING IT FROM OURS; BUT DESPITE PROMISES WE DO NOT KNOW WHEN REVISION OF PRESENT SYSTEM WILL ACTUALLY BE UNDERTAKEN.

3. CONSIDERING ADVERSE PUBLICITY DIRECTED FOR MOMENT AT AMEMBASSY,

POST URGENTLY REQUESTS DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING TAX PROVISIONS IN US FOR VISITING FOREIGN PERFORMERS. SUGGEST SPECIFICS SUCH AS TAX PERCENTAGES LEVIED ON ARTISTS OR GROUPS, PERIOD OF TIME OR AMOUNT OF INCOME PERMITTED WITHOUT IMPOSITION OF TAX, ANY SIMILAR SUBSTANTIVE PROVISIONS IN TAX LAW PERTINENT TO SITUATION.
WOLCOTT

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NNN

Message Attributes

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